



State of Arizona  
**Department of Education**

Tom Horne  
Superintendent of  
Public Instruction

**CN# 10-04**

**MEMORANDUM**

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**To:** Child Nutrition Program Sponsors

**From:** Mary Szafranski, Interim Director  
Arizona Department of Education, Student Services Division

**Date:** November 19, 2003

**RE:** Verification Final Rule Effective School Year 2004-2005

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This memo serves to inform all child nutrition sponsors that the verification procedures for determining eligibility for free and reduced price meals in schools will change beginning school year 2004-2005. Congress has released the final rule to 7 CFR part 245.11, details regarding the final rule are included in this memo.

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service conducted a study on verification in school year 2001-2002. Data from this study showed that the number of children certified as eligible to receive free meals surpassed the number of children who are actually eligible to receive those meals. This study concluded that 43% of applications verified in districts studied had their benefit levels unchanged as a result of the verification process, while 55% had a benefit reduction/termination and 2% had an increase in benefits from reduced-price to free. Due to these results, congress has re-evaluated verification and made a final rule to 7-CFR part 245.11.

Changes that will affect all School Food Authorities in Arizona beginning school year 2004-2005:

- All SFA's must report verification results to the Arizona Department of Education no later than March 1<sup>st</sup>.
- All SFA's must collect and report the number of students who were terminated as a result of verification but who were reinstated as of February 15<sup>th</sup>.

- All SFA's must maintain copies of the verification report and all supporting documentation for a minimum of 3 years.
- All SFA's must have every verified application readily retrievable on an individual school basis and include all documents submitted by the household for the purpose of verifying eligibility.
- All SFA's must retain all relevant correspondence between the household selected for verification and the school food authority.
- For all SFA's receiving a CRE during 2003-2004 school year, verification reports will be collected and analyzed, and appropriate technical assistance will be provided.

**Q: What procedures do I follow for the 03-04 school year?**

A: Follow the verification timeline enclosed and strive to send your verification report to the Arizona Department of Education by December 15<sup>th</sup>. If you have not submitted your verification report by March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004 your specialist will contact you to assist you in this process. No penalty will be assessed to SFA's who do not submit the report during the 2003-2004 school year, however it is highly encouraged. This report can be downloaded at [www.ade.az.gov/health-safety/cnp/nsfp/parentforms.asp](http://www.ade.az.gov/health-safety/cnp/nsfp/parentforms.asp). You can fax this report to (602) 542-1531 with attention to your assigned specialist or mail it to:

Arizona Department of Education  
1535 West Jefferson Street, Bin #7  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

**Q: During the 03-04 school year do I have to submit a verification report to ADE?**

A: No. However, we encourage all school food authorities to submit their verification report by March 1<sup>st</sup> to help address potential problems for the 2004-2005 school year.

**Q: What procedures will I follow during the 2004-2005 school year?**

A: Follow the verification timeline enclosed and adhere to the directions on the verification report. This report will include results of the number of students who were terminated because of verification, but who were reinstated by February 15<sup>th</sup>. Submit verification report to the Arizona Department of Education no later than March 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Q: Will the verification report change for the 2004-2005 school year?**

A: Yes, and it will be updated to include a fourth section to report the number of students terminated and reinstated.

If you have questions regarding this memo, please contact your assigned specialist.

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